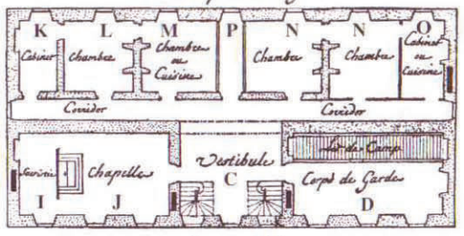
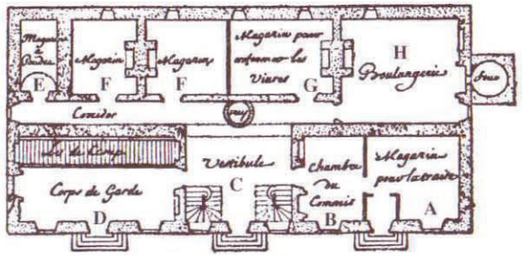
Elevation du côté du sud.

Plan du premier Etage



Second Floor

Plan de l'étage au Rez de chaussée.



Ground Floor

Original floor plans of the "Castle" drawn in 1727

A. Storeroom for trade goods
B. Apartment of the trade clerk
C. Vestibule and well
D. Guardroom or barracks with "camp bed"
E. Powder magazine
F. Storerooms
G. Provisions storeroom
H. Bakery
I. Sacristy
J. Chapel
K. Commandant's office; where Robert Rogers is believed to have been confined in 1768
L. Commanding officer's apartment
M. Officers' mess
N. Officers' apartments
O. Officers' kitchen
P. Corridor to lake side window

Welcome to OLD FORT NIAGARA

Your Guide to the Fort

The history of Old Fort Niagara spans more than 300 years. During the colonial wars in North America a fort at the mouth of the Niagara River was vital, for it controlled access to the Great Lakes and the westward route to the heartland of the continent. With the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825, however, the strategic value of Fort Niagara diminished. It nonetheless remained an active military post well into the 20th century.

The three flags flown daily above the parade ground symbolize the nations which have held Fort Niagara. Each competed for the support of a fourth nation: the powerful Iroquois Confederacy. The French established the first post here, Fort Conti, in 1679. Its successor, Fort Denonville (1687–88) was equally short–lived. In 1726 France finally erected a permanent fortification with the construction of the impressive "French Castle." Britain gained control of Fort Niagara in 1759, during the French & Indian War, after a nineteen-day siege. The British held the post throughout the American Revolution but were forced, by treaty, to yield it to the United States in 1796. Fort Niagara was recaptured by the British in 1813. It was ceded to the United States a second time in 1815 at the end of the War of 1812.

This was Fort Niagara's last armed conflict, and it thereafter served as a peaceful border post. The garrison expanded beyond the walls following the Civil War. Fort Niagara was a barracks and training station for American soldiers throughout both World Wars. The last army units were withdrawn in 1963. Today, the U.S. Coast Guard represents the only military presence on the site.

Old Fort Niagara was restored between 1926 and 1934. It is operated today by the Old Fort Niagara Association, Inc., a not–for–profit organization, in cooperation with the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. Admission fees, Museum Shop sales, grants and donations provide support for operation of the site. Membership in the Old Fort Niagara Association is open to all. Ask for details at the entrance or the Museum Shop or contact:

Old Fort Niagara Association
PO Box 169
Youngstown, NY 14174–0169
tel. (716) 745–7611 • www.oldfortniagara.org

Follow the Tour

For the most enjoyable and comprehensive visit, we suggest that you follow the tour outlined in this brochure. Members of the Old Fort Niagara Staff are available to answer your questions and conduct demonstrations.

Please display your tickets.

Please watch your step on stairs and walls. Small children should be supervised at all times.

No smoking, please, in any of the buildings.

Public Rest Rooms
Located behind the Bakehouse at Point 13.

Snacks and Gifts
Available at the Museum Shop, Point 16.

Your Tour of Old Fort Niagara

The buildings of Old Fort Niagara represent many different periods of its history. Most are original and were erected between 1726 and 1872. Large plaques, representing the arms of France, Great Britain and the United States, indicate the nation responsible for the construction of each. Fort Niagara contained nearly 100 other buildings during its long history. These have disappeared, but archaeologists are now uncovering their foundations.

Begin your tour at Point 1, which serves as an Orientation Center for visitors to Old Fort Niagara.

Point 1 — The Provisions Storehouse (1762)
Constructed by the British, this building originally stood two stories high. It could hold 7,000 barrels of food for the garrison. In later years the Storehouse was also used as a barracks and stable.

Point 2 — The Powder Magazine (1757)
The French erected this building which survived the siege of 1759. Its massive arched ceiling, topped by a thick layer of earth, protected the gunpowder from mortar shells. The garrison's ammunition supply was stored here as late as 1929. In 1826, William Morgan, considered by Freemasons to be a renegade to their order, was kept prisoner in the Magazine. His mysterious disappearance has never been solved and sparked much anti–Masonic feeling in the United States at the time. Exhibits on the history and archaeology of Old Fort Niagara are located at Point 2.

Point 3 — Dauphin Battery and Gate of the Five Nations (1756)
From 1756 until about 1805 the main entrance to Fort Niagara was located on the river side of the South Bastion. The French named the gate in honor of the original Five Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy. The drawbridge was protected by five cannon located in the Dauphin Battery. The gun positions facing the Canadian shore were installed in the 1840s. The Dauphin Battery and the stone gatehouse were reconstructed in 1931.

From Point 3 you can see the hills of the Niagara Escarpment 8 miles (13km) upriver. On clear days the mist from Niagara Falls is sometimes visible 14 miles (22km) to the south.

Point 4 — The South Redoubt (1770)
The British constructed this building before the American Revolution to protect the main gate and provide a platform for cannon. The ground floor was a fortified gateway with a guard room for twenty soldiers located above. On December 19, 1813, attacking British troops had to break down the door of the South Redoubt to subdue its American defenders.

Point 5 — 18–Pounder Battery (1840–72)
During the War of 1812 Fort Niagara exchanged furious artillery barrages with British–held Fort George visible across the river. Heavy guns were placed here and along the river wall during the 1840s to bear on Canada but were never fired in anger. Within sight on the American side are the surviving structures of "New" Fort Niagara, established after the Civil War. This area became Fort Niagara State Park in 1965. The lovely stone lighthouse was built in 1871 and used until 1993.

Point 6 — Scarp Walls and Casemate Gallery (1872)
The earthwork walls of Fort Niagara were reinforced with concrete and brick between 1863 and 1872 due to tensions with British Canada over the American Civil War. Tempers had cooled by 1872, and guns were never mounted here. Steps descend to the South Casemate Gallery designed to contain four 24–pounder cannon whose fire would interlock with that of the North Gallery visible across the ditch. Firing slits for riflemen and a powder magazine are located at the end of the gallery.

Point 7 — The Land Defenses (1755–1872)
Although rebuilt in concrete and brick in the 1860s, these walls follow the lines laid out by the French in 1755. The center of the wall is pierced by the Sally Port, constructed in the 1860s.

The only way to reach the Sally Port from Point 7 is to descend the stairs at the North Bastion near Point 9.

The Outer Works include the large triangular "ravelin," smaller earthworks and a ditch. The ditch was kept dry and, with the other outworks, protected the main walls from cannon fire and assault. The Outer Works are restored to their appearance during the siege of 1759, during which the British established gun batteries within 100 yards (91m) of the Fort. The site of the nearest battery was among the buildings visible by the lake shore. Intense cannon fire from that point nearly demolished the Fort's North Bastion.

Point 8 — The Three Historic Flags
Visible inside the Fort from Point 7 are the three historic flags commemorating the nations that have held Old Fort Niagara. The white French flag was flown here from 1726 to 1759. It was the official banner of the Marine Department, responsible for protecting France's colonies. The British Union flag waved here from 1759 to 1796. It was replaced by the modern version in 1801. The 15–star, 15–stripe United States flag was flown at Fort Niagara from 1796 to 1818. Fort Niagara's original 15-star, 15-stripe flag, captured by the British in 1813, was returned to the museum in 1994.

Point 9 — The North Redoubt (1771)
The two redoubts were literally forts within a fort. The main dif-

it did during the French occupation.

ference between them is that the North Redoubt originally had a powder magazine on its ground floor. Both buildings incorporate two styles popular in 18th century Britain — classical Roman arches and doorways in the stone walls topped by Chinese–style roofs.

Point 10 — The Millet Cross (1926)
Dedicated to the ill–fated French soldiers of Fort Denonville, this bronze cross was erected by the Knights of Columbus in 1926. During the terrible winter of 1687–88 disease and starvation reduced the Fort's garrison of 100 men to only 12 survivors. The present monument commemorates a wooden cross under which Father Pierre Millet, a French Jesuit priest, celebrated a Mass of thanksgiving for the soldiers' survival.

Point 11 — The Rush–Bagot Memorial (1934)
An early armaments agreement was signed by the United States and Great Britain in 1817. Named for its chief negotiators, Richard Rush and Sir Charles Bagot, the treaty limited naval forces on the Great Lakes. The true monument to such efforts is today's unfortified 4,000–mile (6,400km) United States–Canadian border. In clear weather the skyline of Toronto, Ontario can be seen across the 27 miles (43km) of Lake Ontario.

Point 12 — The "French Castle" (1726)
The oldest building in North America's Great Lakes area. See complete description at right.

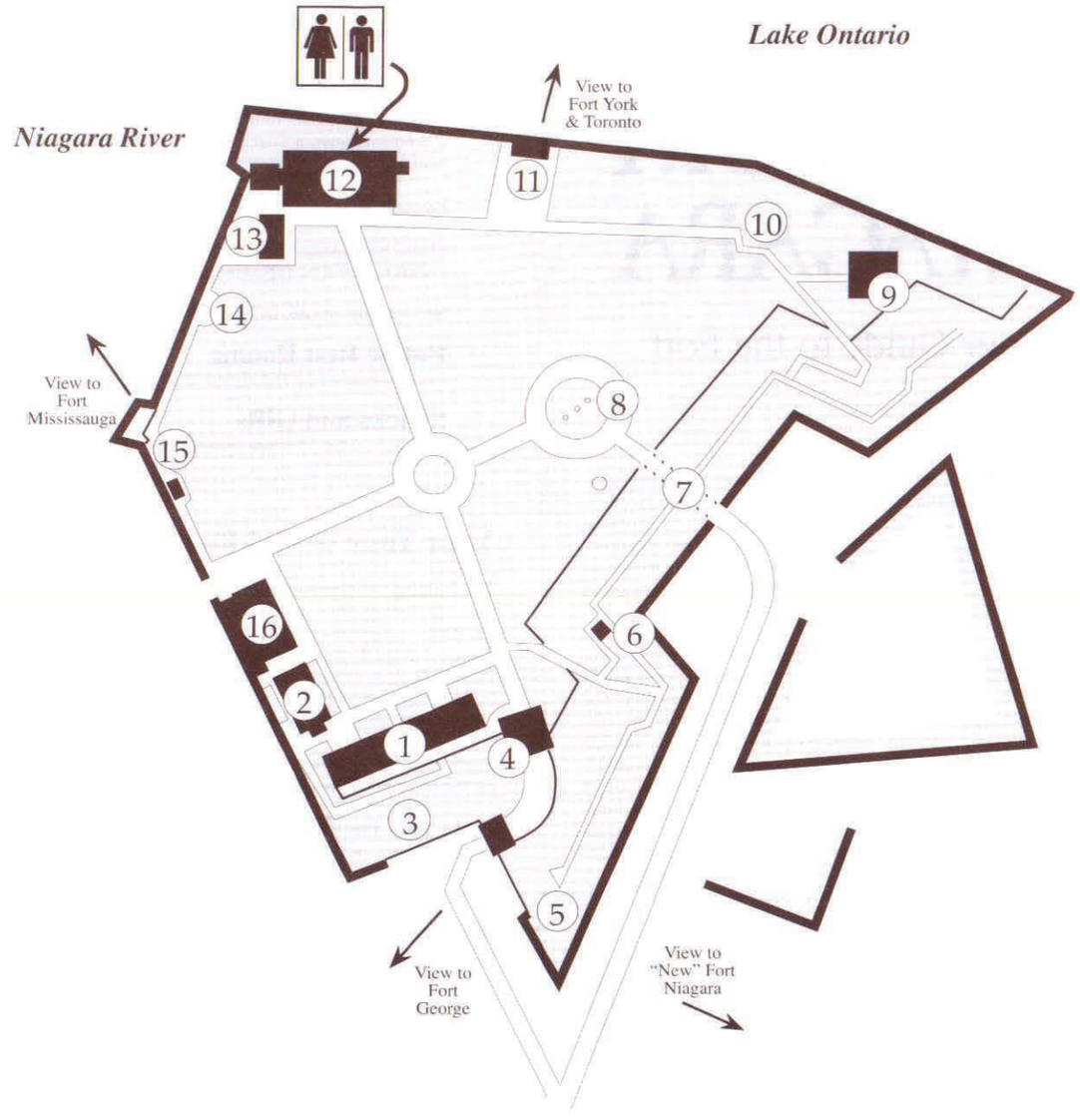
Point 13 — The Bakehouse (1762)
The British constructed this building to replace a French bakery destroyed by fire in 1761. The foundation of the double ovens was salvaged from the earlier structure. Bread for the garrison was baked here until 1870.

***Public restrooms** are located behind the bakehouse. In winter they are accessible through the "Castle."*

Point 14 — The LaSalle Monument (1934)
The earliest post on this site was established in 1679 by the famous French explorer René-Robert Cavelier de LaSalle. He christened it Fort Conti and used it as a base while building his sailing vessel "Griffon" above Niagara Falls.

Point 15 — The River Defenses (1839–43)
British construction of Fort Mississauga on the Canadian shore in 1814 exposed the interior of Fort Niagara to bombardment. The problem was remedied between 1839 and 1841 by erection of the massive River Wall. This was of uniform height for its entire length until 1889 when the northern end was torn down. The difference in the stonework resulted from a change in stone suppliers between 1839 and 1840. Guns on the Hot Shot Battery face Fort Mississauga, visible across the river in Niagara–on–the–Lake, Ontario. Adjacent to the battery is the Hot Shot Furnace, completed in 1843. Here cannon balls could be heated nearly white–hot. When fired into a wooden ship or building, hot shot would quickly set it afire. The arched Postern Gate was the main entrance to Fort Niagara after 1839.

Point 16 — The Log Cabin (1932)
Erected in 1932, this structure was intended to represent a log cabin originally built here by the French in 1757. The building contains the Old Fort Niagara Museum Shop. Books, film, museum reproductions, and snacks may be purchased here. All proceeds are used for the preservation and operation of Old Fort Niagara.



State of the Arts
NYSCA

Programming at Old Fort Niagara is made possible, in part, with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a State Agency.

Old Fort Niagara's website (www.oldfortniagara.org) is provided as a public service by CCNN Internet Services of Niagara Falls, NY.

The "French Castle" — Point 12
Please refer to the diagrams on the following page.

Do not cross railings into exhibit areas—alarm will sound!

The oldest building of the Fort and, indeed, in the eastern interior of North America, the "Castle" was originally the sole structure of Fort Niagara. To calm the suspicions of the hostile Iroquois, the French designed it to resemble a large trading house. The building was, in actuality, a strong citadel capable of resisting Indian attack. The Castle has been restored to its 1727 appearance, at which time most garrison facilities were located within its walls. Following expansion of the Fort in 1755–57, the Castle was used as officers' quarters. Army families resided here as late as World War I.

The building was designed by Gaspard–Joseph Chaussegros de Léry, chief engineer of New France. His layout of the ground floor included storerooms, a powder magazine, bakery, guardhouse, and well. Living quarters and a chapel were on the second floor. Overhanging or "machicolated" dormers on the attic level provided defensive positions for muskets and light cannon and gave the structure its original French name — the "machicolated house." The term "Castle" is not believed to have been in general use until U.S. officers lived here in the 1830s.

One of the most important parts of the ground floor was the Trade Room (A&B). During the French regime, Fort Niagara was a trading post as well as a military fortification. Indians came here in great numbers to exchange furs for manufactured goods.

The vestibule (C) contains a 25 foot-deep well. It provided water for the Castle's occupants from 1726 until about 1815 and was then sealed, only to be discovered and reopened in 1926. A popular local legend, first recorded in 1839, tells of the headless ghost of a murdered French officer said to haunt the well. When the moon is full, the story goes, he arises to search for his missing head.

The chapel (J) on the second floor was the earliest permanent church in western New York. Across the vestibule is a barracks room (D), originally home to about 30 French soldiers. More comfortable officers' apartments (K–O) line the lake side of this floor. The narrow room (K) at the west end of the corridor was used briefly in 1768 as a cell for Robert Rogers, the famous ranger of the French & Indian War and hero of the historical novel *Northwest Passage*. Accused of treason by British authorities, Rogers was kept chained and guarded here while being taken to Montreal for trial.

The wooden roof of the Castle was removed during the War of 1812. Earthen ramparts were constructed atop the building with cannon placed on the attic floor to bombard Fort George. Here, in the midst of a furious cannonade on November 21, 1812, a soldier's wife, Betsy Doyle (usually remembered today as "Fanny" Doyle) helped load a cannon and gained fame as a heroine of the War of 1812.

The Castle was repaired and restored between 1926 and 1933. The layout and details of the building today generally conform to its 1727 arrangement. Mid–18th century furnishings were reproduced in an effort to make the Castle appear substantially as it did during the French occupation.